

Revd Michael Burns
Christ Church West Wimbledon
Sermon :
July 15, 2018 ~ “Seventh Sunday of Trinity”

Baptism Of Sophia Harris Trinity 7 2018 – Mark 4/35–41

A writer, Susan Sayers has penned these words: “Although we perhaps know that God is all-mighty, the way we live often shows that we don’t take this terribly seriously. Many claiming belief in God can convey the impression of him as a slightly ridiculous figure, a well-meaning but inept gentleman, part security blanket and part Father Christmas. For the most part God can be ignored and we can so easily live our lives without him, viewing prayer as a last resort.”

In our second reading today, we hear the story of the fierce storm which quickly changes this mind-set in the disciples. The disciples are floating in their solid, wooden hulled fishing boat, with its smell of fish and damp. The sails are straining under the increasing wind and the ropes are creaking. All is normal and familiar. Suddenly, however, the wind increases and the men panic. They quickly wake Jesus in their alarm – and are absolutely astounded when they see at first hand Jesus’ power in action when he calms the storm. God very much at work.

And God is very much at work still today, if only human beings have eyes to see. One of the best ways in which we see God at work is what we are doing this morning here at Christ Church – being part of the baptism of Sophia, joining her proud parents, Vanessa and John together with brother Theo, supported by godparents Carol and Michelle – together with a great gathering of their family and friends. They have all

brought Sophia here to offer her to God for him to bless her and all that lies ahead for her in her life as it unfolds – and we are enormously privileged to be part of this today. It is a lovely act of faith, offering a new born child to God, and what we are doing is echoed in the collect for today “Generous God, you give us gifts and make them grow”...well there is no doubt that Sophia is a gift for John and Vanessa and she is certainly growing since she was born on 12 November! Then the second part of the prayer reminds us that as well as growing physically we all need to grow in our faith: “though our faith is small as a mustard seed, make it grow to your glory and the flourishing of your kingdom” – and who could not say a loud ‘Amen’ to that? All of this is underlined in the first reading from Paul where we read the words: “He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love and he destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ.”

As we give thanks for Sophia here at her christening – her ‘Christing’ – so we once again renew our faith as the baptised members of God’s Church, giving thanks to Almighty God for his generosity and love to each one of us shown through Jesus of Nazareth whose disciples we are today.